

241 section is clearly set off from the round part. The Eastern Timbira term for this
412 implement, *pičwapo*, means "sharp, flat wood." In probing for tubers, especially for sweet potatoes, these farmers use a special pointed stick some 40 cm. in length, which is often derived from the end of a worn-out bow. These two are the only native agricultural implements that persist in contemporary use in Ponto.

242 Except for rice and bitter manioc, plants of one species rarely occupy one continuous major strip, the general practice being to dispose them in patches here and there or mixed with other crops.

243 Among Timbira cultivated plants, maize holds the place of honor, being the only
177 one whose origin is explained by a myth. Though Ribeiro mentions only two indigenous varieties,¹⁰ the *Ramkô'kamekra* raise four kinds of small-kerneled maize which they derive from the legendary Star maiden, *Kačëkwë'i*, viz. 1, *pôhiépé*, true or good maize, with small, white, and very soft kernels; 2, *pôhiyáká*, white maize, somewhat larger, but otherwise similar; 3, *pôhikreakáre*, with small blue kernels; and 4, *to'rómre*, with black kernels of medium size. The large-kerneled varieties, *pôhiti*, are additions from the Neobrasilians.

243 The appearance of the Pleiades (*krot*) after sunset on the western horizon is a
221 harbinger of the rainy season and indicates the need for starting a clearing in order
805 to plant at the first rainfall. This ushers in the *meipimrã'k* period (p. 84), roughly coterminous with the rainy season since it ends with the commencement of the maize harvest.

243 *Horticultural rites.*—A man named *Vôkrãkë'*, whose maternal home is on the
624 east side of the village circle, is charged with ceremonially opening the planting as
796 well as the harvesting of maize. On the former occasion there figures a small gourd bowl whose edge is painted with *urucú* and which is filled with maize kernels. *Vôkrãkë'* takes this container to the plaza and sets it on the ground, where people dance around it. Then he takes the bowl to his wife's plot and plants the maize, whereupon others are free to follow his example. After this functionary's death his office descends to the matrilineal kinsman to whom he has transferred his name.

243 When the maize stands about 1 m. high, another ceremony is held in order to
782 induce the Moon, *Pôduvrj*, to ward off noxious animal parasites from the plants.
796 Clapping together their hands and singing "*Pôduvrjre kayë'yë' rivahá vaká mopó tu krére*," all the villagers of both sexes then slowly dance in the plaza on a full-moon night, moving from the north southward under the leadership of a precentor wielding his rattle. In the rainy season they fear a lunar eclipse even far more than during the dry period, for they think it would destroy the crops. The relevant ceremonies will be described later.

776 In case of drought, however, not the Moon, but the Sun, *Pqt*, is addressed. Three
782 old men then march round the boulevard, singing "*kedeti/imápéy/vayakri'* (Grandfather [=sun],/be good to me and/gladdden me [by rain])."

796 No one—not even the woman owning the plot—is free to eat of the crop until
624 the councilors have tasted of it and declared it mature. The maize harvest is opened
243 by the same man, *Vôkrãkë'*, who inaugurated the planting season. First, a hunting party leaves to secure meat for the village. When they return with game, *Vôkrãkë'* asks his wife to fetch from the plots a carrying basket full of maize ears, which are husked and cooked into meat pies to be served to the councilors in the plaza. Of the husks *Vôkrãkë'* makes some twenty shuttlecocks, which his son *Rarã'k* takes to the plaza and throws, one by one, into the circle of players. These throw each ball toward one another with the palm of the hand as long as possible without per-

¹⁰ *Memoria*, § 11.

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mitting it to drop to the ground. If a player at last allows it to fall, it is not picked up, but Rara'k throws a new one into the ring until all the shuttlecocks are forfeited.

After midnight the men of both rainy season moieties assemble by two fires in the plaza, whither a man named Kái brings them a bundle of unfeathered arrows with balls of maize husk covering their points (pl. 16, a). The players step up in pairs (so as to represent in each case both moieties) and try to hit each other with the arrows, which they throw with their hands.

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In 1929, during my first visit, when I had not yet come to understand anything of the ceremonial, I had the following experience. An Indian wishing to show me a special favor had some sweet potatoes brought from the plantation for my delectation before the harvest time had been officially announced. In my innocence I eulogized the generous donor before the elders in the plaza, but at once noted the silent, but significant glances passed among them. The donor was thus placed in an ambiguous position and incurred censure, though in deference to me this was not carried too far. However, the culprit was obliged to hurry to the plaza with a bowlful of baked sweet potatoes for the elders, who consumed them and declared the crop ready for harvesting. Similarly I observed that they received two water-melons when the harvest for these fruits was opened.

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Another ceremony, hōwa (= pointed leaf, i.e., sweet potato), is devoted to the sweet potatoes. It always takes place when these plants produce their vines, immediately preceding the ceremony just described of opening the maize harvest. The performers, numbering some twenty, are organized like the festive organizations, but their activities are confined to this single annual appearance at the hōwa. As in these other societies, membership is inherited matrilineally with the personal name. The lodge is situated on the north side of the eastern half of the village circle. Like the other societies, this, too, has a leader, the hōwakédeti (grandfather of the hōwa). He wears hanging down the nape of his neck from a neck cord a feather from the tail of a red arara. The present incumbent is the chief Haktokót, but the title hōwa itself belongs to the bearer of the name Rara'k, who in this capacity wears falcon down on his body and has a little whistle of Mataco type.¹⁰⁰ The participants also include a precentor and two girl auxiliaries.

[362] The members paint the entire body with white clay, and their faces are marked with two obtuse-angled parallel lines traced with the finger tips with the same pigment. The apex of one of these angles is on the forehead, while its sides extend over the temples; the point of the other angle is on the tip of the nose and its sides are drawn across the cheeks.

The hōwa actor proper is decorated at sunset. At nightfall a big fire is kindled in the plaza, where the precentor remains waiting. Finally the hōwa leaves his maternal home and walks to the plaza, where the precentor begins singing to the accompaniment of a rattle, while the hōwa, with his pinōwē'ipey behind him, sounds his whistle. Thereupon the hōwakédeti steps out of his maternal house, dances toward the plaza, but immediately returns in order to bring with him the entire membership, who now dance in the plaza with outstretched arms.

Toward midnight all the women and girls come out of their houses and range themselves in groups at the opening of the radial paths leading from their maternal homes to the plaza. The hōwa march round the plaza from group to group, singing before each of them.

The object of this ceremony is to ensure for each extended family an adequate supply of sweet potatoes, corresponding to the number of its female members.

¹⁰⁰ Izikowitz, Musical Instruments, 333.

789 Sometimes a tamhã'k (p. 98) is made to assume the duty of officially tasting
624 sweet potatoes and gourds prior to the harvest. Thus, the Indians hope to improve
their crops at the eleventh hour because the tamhã'k, especially if young and vigorous, are credited with the magical power of improving and increasing the yield. The member chosen is then decorated with the falcão down appropriate to his organization.

251 *Storage.*—According to Ribeiro the Eastern Timbira cached their food supplies from year to year in special storehouses: "... e entre tanto que cresce e sazona a plantaço comem elles a coberto das invernadas os generos que do anno passado ficam reservados em paioes particulares, que cada familia guardou escondidamente para si." Personally I have never seen anything deserving of the designation paiol (storage room)—except for the modern, closed attics. Tubers—sweet potatoes, yams, bitter and sweet manioc, as well as arrowroot—are left in the ground, where they keep best. Thence the Indians take just enough to supply several days' need. Gourds and beans are rarely kept for a longer period; ground nuts are stowed away in little baskets and bags of buryty bast. Maize, too, is usually left in the plantation as long as possible and brought home according to demand. Finally, the residue is carried to the house in one lot, the husk-covered ears being hung in bunches below the roof so as to be protected against insects by the smoke. Another way is to fill large buryty baskets and stoppered gourd vessels with the kernels, but there they usually soon fall prey to insects. Rice, when ripe, must be harvested forthwith; at first it is gathered in the plantation on a grate of poles covered by a roof, later it is gradually transferred to the village, where it is piled up in the attic in regularly stratified heaps. This process, like rice-growing itself, is derived from the Neobrazilians.

242 Real care is devoted only to next year's seed-corn, which is stored in firmly corded bags and gourds closed with wax, these containers being packed in baskets usually suspended high up under the roof.

HUNTING

177 The agricultural progress of the Indians is not due to Neobrazilian example nor to
224 the instructions of missionaries and officials of the Indian Welfare Service. It was grim necessity that drove the natives to create a new basis of subsistence. The reduction of the tribal territory to one-twentieth of its former extent; the encroachments of Neobrazilian cattle on even this residual habitat; and the use of firearms in hunting by Neobrazilians and, to some extent, also by the Indians caused such diminution of big game that hunting rapidly lost its economic significance. The younger people of today know tapirs, jaguars, or the mutum (*Mitua mitu*) at best from the narratives of their elders. The only groups preserving the normal aboriginal state in this respect are the Western Gaviões, who bar civilized individuals from their woods, and the Timbira of the Gurupy, beyond whose riparian dwellings extend vast tracts of wholly unsettled forests. All other tribes have for a long time depended primarily on vegetable fare. At festivals, as I discovered among the Krahô', the hunters often vainly exert themselves for weeks in order to secure the game flesh required for the ceremonially prescribed meat pies. During my stay with the Pukôbye I saw no meat except that of stolen head of cattle. While spending six days among the Kre'pq'mkateye I saw no booty from the chase except for a capybara (*Hydrochoerus capibara*); and when I arrived among the Krikati the chief's welcome was the indignant query why I had not brought some meat.

¹²⁰ *Memoria*, § 11.

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561 the house of the challenging team's *vq'ts'*. The course of a relay race is from this
616 house along her semicircle, thence onward. Two competitors theoretically run
562 from the house of the challenger's *vq'ts'* across the plaza to the opponents' *vq'ts'*
527 house. In the present village the ground slopes southward in some measure, so
these races always proceed from the house of the *vq'ts'* of the eastern age-class
moiety (on the north side of the village) to the *vq'ts'* house of the complementary
pair.

561 *Leaders.*—The two official leaders, *mamkyé'ti*, of a class represent, respectively,
881 the eastern and western plaza groups. Before the opening of the first initiation
624 phase they are carefully selected by the councilors from among the prospective
initiates. To begin the solemnities these two boys are led out of their mothers'
houses and made to face each other in the plaza. Their badge is a fan of erect arara
tail feathers worn at the back of the head. In the earlier phase, where the initiates
of the eastern and the western plaza groups appear separately, each leader heads
his group, all marching in Indian file. In the latter phase, where this dichotomy
no longer holds, and after the close of initiation, the leader of the eastern moiety
takes precedence.

561 These *mamkyé'ti* form part of a ceremonial aristocracy (p. 97). It is they who
624 actually govern the age classes, being possibly the only functionaries who literally
622 issue orders among the Canella, a task for which they are trained from the begin-
ning. Only they have the right to summon their class fellows, who are obliged to
obey the call and may not assemble without their leaders. Anyone who has dealings
with a class, including the chiefs, must turn to its *mamkyé'ti*. These leaders are
subject only to the council and—during the initiation period—also to the *mekapónkate*
(instructor, commandant), who belongs to an older class, and to his deputy,
the *mekapónkatekahq'k*, the senior member of the class to be initiated.

In case of a leader's death no substitute is chosen. If both *mamkyé'ti* should die
prematurely, the instructor's deputy assumes the leadership, but this is always
regarded as a calamity for the class. Theoretically, the leaders are equals, but in
practice the abler of the two soon gains ascendancy without, however, completely
eclipsing his colleague. In contrast to the chiefs, the *mamkyé'ti* exercise no
authority whatever beyond their age class.

561 In former times the *mamkyé'ti* led their class in war and in the chase, though
624 always aided by one or several older men. Since warfare belongs completely to
701 the past and communal hunting has dwindled in importance the present signifi-
cance of these officers is slight—apart from ceremonial. The present situation for
the several classes is as follows:

(a) The youngest class, *kra'tš'kama*, is actually governed by its *mekapónkate*.

561 (b) The next older class, *pōh'itkama*, has two *mamkyé'ti*, but they are com-
624 pletely overshadowed by the personality of *Kapērtq'k*, the second commandant
[555] and actual leader.

(c) The *kapranpotikama* have a very able and energetic leader named *Yō'ro*;
his colleague is no longer living. During the last *pepyé* ceremony of this class
(1923) *Čatá* was their instructor; he remained with them after the close of the
initiation and from sheer devotion to his pupils continues as their nonofficial com-
mandant. *Yō'ro* still continues to regard him as a superior.

(d) The oldest active class, the *rópikama*, have only one *mamkyé'ti*, *Koipō'ro*,
the other having died.

616 The term *mamkyé'ti*, evidently connected with *kyé*, exogamous moiety, suggests
174 that the leaders originally represented the exogamous halves rather than the plaza